

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY  
THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

**GENERAL TOPIC:** Operations

**REFERENCES:** Use of State  
Resources Policy; Software  
Policy; Discrimination  
Complaint Policy & Procedure;  
Electronic E-Mail Policy;  
Sexual Harassment Policy; Ch.  
42.17 RCW; Ch. 42.52 RCW; WAC  
292-110-010

**SUBJECT:** Internet Services  
Use

**RESOURCE CONTACT:** Information  
Services  
Manager

**APPROVED:**

10/2/02

(Date)

**SCOPE:** All Employees of the  
Office of the Attorney  
General

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**I. POLICY STATEMENT:**

**A. Overview**

The Internet is available for use in support of the goals, objectives and operation of the Attorney General's Office. Its use is subject to the restrictions set out in the Use of State Resources, Electronic Mail Use and Software Use policies, including applicable ethical standards. Internet use is not permitted for personal gain. It should not reflect poorly on the Office of the Attorney General nor should it interfere with job performance.

The Internet is a state resource, and as such, its use will be governed by existing office policies and applicable state laws and regulations dealing with the appropriate and ethical use of state resources. De minimis use will be governed by the Use of State

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Resources Policy, in addition to this policy.<sup>1</sup>

The Internet will not be utilized to transmit information that:

- Promotes or constitutes discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, creed, age, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or veteran status;
- Promotes or constitutes sexual harassment or contains sexual content;
- Infringes any copyright;
- Expresses personal political beliefs;
- Involves a personal, outside business or private employment, or financial benefit or gain;
- Promotes or constitutes any unlawful activity.

Agency management has the authority to monitor employee use of the Internet to ensure appropriate use.

Failure to abide by policies established for use of the Internet or participation in any activity deemed inappropriate may result in the loss of access privileges and/or disciplinary action.

## **B. Privacy**

The Internet is an unsecured publicly accessible network. Employees and volunteers should have no expectation of privacy in the use of Internet resources. Owners of Internet sites commonly

<sup>1</sup> Under the Use of State Resources policy, employees and volunteers may make very limited personal use of the Internet if such use supports organizational effectiveness and does not undermine public trust and confidence as determined by management, and the following conditions apply:

- There is little to no cost to the State;
- Any use is brief in duration, occurs infrequently, and is the most effective use of time or resources;
- The use of state resources does not interfere with the performance of the employee's or volunteer's official duties;
- The use does not disrupt or distract from the conduct of state business due to volume or frequency;
- The use does not disrupt other state employees or volunteers and does not obligate them to make a personal use of state resources;
- The use does not compromise the security or integrity of state information or software.
- The use is approved by management.

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monitor usage activity and those activities may be disclosed to any number of parties.

The Office of the Attorney General reserves the right to monitor Internet usage at such times and in such circumstances as appropriate.

The Internet shall not be used to distribute attorney-client-privileged material beyond the intended recipients.

### C. Electronic Mail

Employees and volunteers sending e-mail over the Internet shall do so in compliance with the Electronic Mail Use policy. There is a risk of interception of Internet e-mail and caution should be used in deciding whether or not to send privileged or extremely sensitive information by Internet e-mail.

Employees shall use caution when attachments are included in messages received over the Internet. Any attachments containing executable programs (files with extensions ".EXE", ".COM", or ".BAT") shall not be opened or saved to a hard drive without prior approval from ISD. See the Software Use Policy.

### D. Security

Employees and volunteers shall not attempt to illegally access other networks or systems through the Internet (hacking) nor visit "hacker" web sites. Employees and volunteers who may inadvertently access a prohibited site or a site operated by those with known malicious intent, shall notify ISD Customer Support so subsequent tracking logs and/or preventive measures can be taken.

All employees and volunteers shall ensure that their use of the Internet does not compromise the security and integrity of the state's information infrastructure or information technology, networks and computer equipment, whether by allowing intruders into the networks or by introducing viruses or other threats.

An employee shall not use another employee's network account to gain access to the Internet. An employee shall not permit another employee or person to access the Internet using her or his own network account.

### E. Software

Employees and volunteers shall download software only from an

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Internet site when approved by ISD. While software is available to install from the Internet, it is subject to the Attorney General's Office Software Policy. Downloading and installing unauthorized software from the Internet, including "plug-ins," updates to existing software, "shareware," "freeware" or "alpha/beta" versions of programs is a violation of this policy.

The Information Services Manager will maintain and publish a list of "ISD Approved Software" and provide such software or instructions to obtain such software upon request, including Internet locations from where office employees may install the software.

Employees shall not upload or e-mail files or programs that can cause harm to other networks or systems ("viruses", "bombs", "worms", etc.).

Employees must observe copyright laws and license agreements.

#### **F. AGO World Wide Web Site**

Updates to the AGO home page will be coordinated through the AGO Internet Web Council. Divisions desiring the ability to maintain their portion of the AGO home page will coordinate through the AGO Internet Web Council.

#### **G. Other Services**

There are goods and services available for purchase on the Internet. Purchase of such goods or services is subject to the same request and approval procedures as any other purchases of similar goods or services by the office.

Requests for paid on-line information services shall be submitted to the Attorney General's Office library manager for approval and processing.

#### **H. Other Problematic Uses**

In accordance with WAC 292-110-010, AGO employees and volunteers may make limited personal use of the Internet as long as such use supports organizational effectiveness and does not undermine public trust and confidence. AGO employees and volunteers may make occasional and limited personal use of Internet services. All personal Internet use is subject to the AGO Use of State Resources policy, the AGO Electronic Mail Use policy and the AGO Software Use policy.

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The following are examples of permissible and impermissible personal uses of the AGO network and state information infrastructure to access Internet services; this list is by way of example and is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive. An employee or volunteer:

- May visit World Wide Web (WWW) sites but it is impermissible to visit a site that is known to be operated or frequented by those with known malicious intent such as known "hacker web sites" or sites incongruent with policy. May briefly and infrequently view audio/video feeds (streaming media). Prolonged activity consumes computer network resources (bandwidth) and continuous access is costly. Internet radio transmissions present a similar problem;

The following are examples of impermissible uses whether for personal or non-personal use.

- May not use instant messaging or chat services that require installation of additional software because the software is not approved for use by the AGO. An example of permissible use would include those sites with "built in" chat services such as the NAAG web site.
- May not use external Internet (WWW) based e-mail systems because doing so bypasses AGO virus detection software, may compromise AGO work product, and violates the AGO Electronic Mail Use policy.

## II. PROCEDURES:

### Responsibility:

### Action:

#### Daily Use of Internet Systems:

All Employees

Understand and follow the guidelines contained in this policy.

#### When a Supervisor Believes There is a Need to Access an Employee's Internet Access History:

Supervisor

If the supervisor believes that there is a need to access the employee's Internet access history, he or she submits a written request (memo or e-mail note) to the division chief with copies to the appropriate deputy attorney general

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and the personnel office.

Notifies the employee within 48 hours after access to his/her Internet access history, unless there is a need for security because of a criminal investigation.

Division Chief

Provides a copy of the request to the Information Services Manager.

Information Services Manager

Makes arrangements for viewing of the employee's Internet access history by the supervisor.

Notifies the Director of Administration.

Use and Maintenance of the Agency World Wide Web Site:

AGO Internet Web Council

Maintains and monitors content and publication of materials on the World Wide Web site. Establishes standards for World Wide Web publication and infrastructure.

Agency Subscriptions to Online Internet Services:

Library Manager

Manages and maintains on-line subscriptions made available through the Internet.

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